

HOW TO...

Create a maze

Losing yourself in a good maze is always fun. Here **Mike Bedford** explains how a free program can help you go round the bend by creating printable mazes instantly

Whether it's the Labyrinth of Knossos or the Hampton Court Maze, the idea of finding our way through an endless series of twisting passages has fascinated people for centuries. But mazes aren't just a historical curiosity; they have held on to their appeal. If you want something to keep the kids occupied on long car journeys, or a puzzle to put in your club newsletter, free software is at hand to help you create your own mazes.

Here we're using the free version of Maze Creator. Before attempting our walkthrough, download it from www.mazecreator.com and install it on your PC. Later, you could try one of the more advanced versions for more impressive results, but note that the demos are time-limited.

1 Start Maze Creator and select New from the File menu to draw a grid. When you create a maze it will be generated by deleting line segments from this grid. A 10x10 maze will be easy to solve, so we'll use a larger grid. Select Maze Setup from the Maze Options menu to display the Maze Creator Settings dialog box. Go to the Dimensions tab and enter 20 into the Cells Wide and Cells Long boxes. We'll also change the size of the maze so you can see it all without scrolling. Select the Page tab on the Maze Creator Settings dialog box and enter 7 into the Width and Height boxes

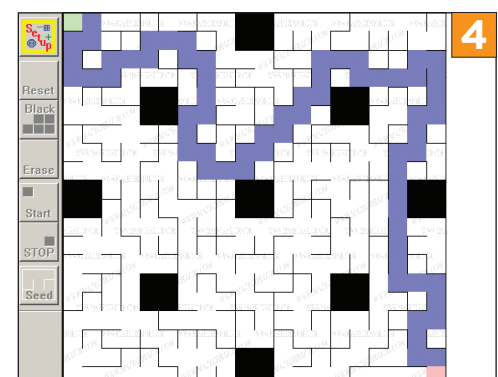
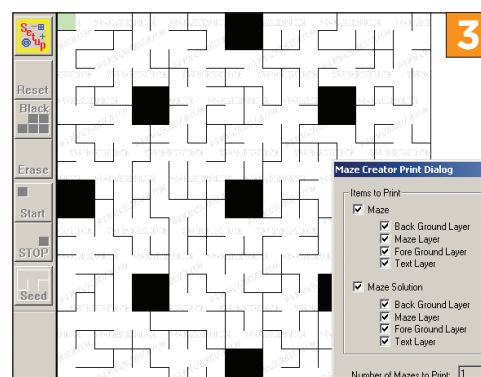
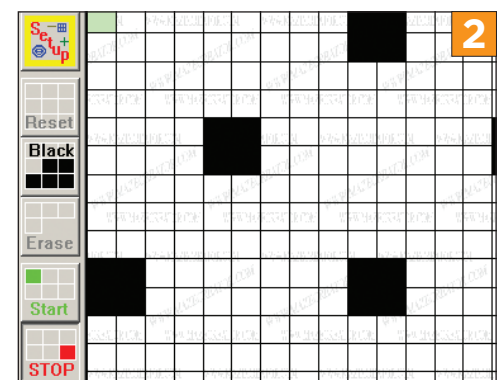
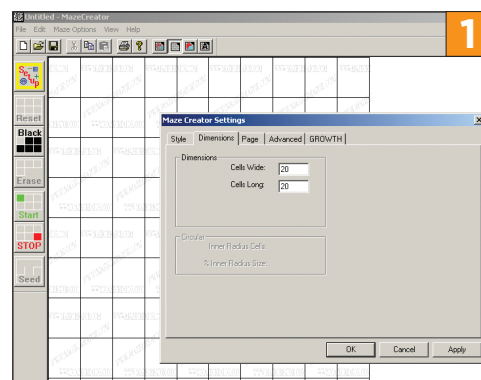
before clicking on OK. The grid will be redrawn according to the new settings.

2 Maze Creator lets you customise your maze by blanking cells in the grid. You could use this to draw a simple pattern to make your maze look more interesting. To turn a cell black, click on the Black button at the left-hand side of the screen and then click in a cell, or use the Erase button to turn cells white. Also define the start and end squares using the Start and Stop buttons respectively.

3 Next, select Make Maze from the Maze Options menu. A maze will be drawn at random and this will be different every time. To print your maze, select the Print option from the File menu, choose the items you want to print and click the Print button.

Other versions of Maze Creator let you export a maze as a graphics file so you can paste it into a Microsoft Word document. Even with this free version, you could capture the screen using the Print Screen key and paste that into a document, cropping as necessary.

4 Finally, if you can't figure out how to plot a route through your maze, just select View Solution from the View menu, and the correct path will appear on the screen. 



HOW TO...
PAGE 139

ADVANCED
WINDOWS
PAGE 146

HOW IT WORKS
PAGE 148

UPGRADE
WORKSHOP
PAGE 150